

Rep. Lofgren Urges Administration to Question Vietnam at Universal Periodic Review

Washington, D.C. — Representative Zoe Lofgren (D-CA) recently authored a letter that was also signed by Reps. Chris Smith (R-NJ), Loretta Sanchez (D-CA), and Anh “Joseph” Cao (R-LA), calling on the Obama Administration to actively participate in the UN Human Rights Council's review of Vietnam during the current session of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR).

Letter Calls on Government to Press Vietnam on Human Rights Record

April 28, 2009

Washington, D.C. — Representative Zoe Lofgren (D-CA) recently authored a letter that was also signed by Reps. Chris Smith (R-NJ), Loretta Sanchez (D-CA), and Anh “Joseph” Cao (R-LA), calling on the Obama Administration to actively participate in the UN Human Rights Council's review of Vietnam during the current session of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). The Congressional Caucus on Vietnam, which is co-chaired by Reps. Lofgren, Smith, Sanchez, and Cao, worked with the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom and various non-governmental organizations to develop a list of suggested questions for the review. This list accompanied Rep. Lofgren's letter, which was sent to the United States Mission to the United Nations.

[Click here for a pdf of the letter to United States Mission to the United Nations](#)

[Click here for a pdf of the Vietnam Caucus Questions.](#)

April 24, 2009

The
Honorable Susan Rice

Permanent
Representative of the United States to the United Nations

140 East 45th
Street

New York, NY
10017

Dear Madame
Ambassador:

As Members
of the United States House of Representatives and Co-Chairs of the
Congressional Caucus on Vietnam, we write to urge the United States Mission to
the United Nations to participate actively in the Human Rights Council's review
of Vietnam during the current session of the Universal Periodic Review
(UPR).

The UPR
process offers a unique opportunity to assess publicly the human rights records
of UN Member States. On May 8, 2009,
Vietnam will come before the UPR for the first time. As you know, any Member State can pose
questions of the Government of Vietnam during the review.

We believe
it is imperative that the UPR include a full accounting of human rights
conditions in Vietnam, including the multitude of abuses detailed in the State
Department's 2008 Country Report on Human Rights Practices. Toward that end, the Congressional Caucus on
Vietnam has worked with the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom
and various non-governmental organizations to develop the enclosed list of
suggested questions for the review of Vietnam.
These questions cover a wide range of critical issues and abuses,
including the Vietnamese government's continuing crackdown on democracy
activists, journalists and other dissidents, its restrictions on religious
freedom, its pervasive censorship of the internet, and widespread arbitrary
detention and deprivation of due process.

We respectfully request that the United States Mission consider submitting the enclosed questions during the UPR session for Vietnam. Given that the UPR considers the human rights record of each country only once every four years, it is crucial that this opportunity not be missed.

Sincerely,

ZOE LOFGREN

CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

Member of
Congress

Member of Congress

LORETTA
SANCHEZ

ANH "JOSEPH" CAO

Member of
Congress

Member of Congress

cc: Acting Assistant Secretary of State Karen Stewart, Bureau of
Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor

Acting

Assistant Secretary of State Glyn Davies, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific
Affairs